

TNRCC WATER QUALITY INVESTIGATOR TRAINING PROGRAM

This document describes the policy and guidance for participation in the Water Quality Investigator Training Program in the Field Operations Division (FOD) of the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission.

Applicability

The training program is applicable to FOD staff who will conduct inspections of domestic or industrial wastewater treatment plants, sewage sludge beneficial use sites, and sewage sludge transporters.

Program Trainers

Each regional office will designate person(s) who have demonstrated experience, knowledge, and ability to serve as program trainers. These designated trainers are responsible for providing supervision, instruction, and documentation relating to the Water Quality Investigator Training Program. Any fully qualified investigator, however, may provide on-the-job (OJT) inspection training without having been designated as a program trainer.

Four Phases

The training program consists of four phases:

1. Basic Orientation and Health and Safety Training
2. Basic Investigator Training
3. Advanced Investigator Training
4. Refresher Training

Documentation

Training requirements may be met through supervised independent study, classroom training, and OJT. Regional programs may be structured to meet specific needs, but the trainer must document how each investigator meets the training requirements.

Training must be documented using the training records included with this document. Suggested training materials are available in the regional office or through the FOD Program Liaison.

The original training records will be kept in the regional office. Copies of the training records must be included with the certification recommendation form when it is submitted to the central office of FOD.

Certification

Upon completion of the basic or senior training requirements, an investigator should be recommended for certification by submitting the appropriate recommendation form (signed by regional management) and copies of the applicable training records to the administrative technician in the Operations Support Section in the central office of FOD. The administrative technician will route the documents to the FOD Program Support Section Manager for review and signature. The documents will then be returned to the administrative technician for preparation of a certificate. The administrative technician will send the certificate to the Regional Section Manager for distribution to the appropriate inspector. The administrative technician will also keep a file of all issued certifications.

Attachments

The following attachments are included with this document:

1. Water Quality Investigator Training Requirements
2. Water Quality Investigator Training Records
3. Basic Water Quality Investigator Certification Recommendation Form
4. Senior Water Quality Investigator Certification Recommendation Form

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TNRCC WATER QUALITY INVESTIGATOR TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Phase 1: Basic Orientation and Health and Safety Training

Objectives: To meet the minimum health, safety, and agency program orientation requirements.

1A. Basic Orientation (10 Hours)

Suggested Materials:

- TNRCC Employee Orientation
- TNRCC Employee Handbook
- TNRCC Operating Procedures (OP)

1B. Personal Protection and Safety (6 Hours)

- TNRCC Safety Training
- TNRCC Inspection Manual(s)
- Safety Videos
- Personal Protection and Safety Course, if inspections will involve possible exposure to hazardous materials *

1C. Health Monitoring

- Baseline physical examination or continuing enrollment in the health monitoring program *

* Note: Investigators may not enter areas where a risk of exposure to hazardous materials exists until health monitoring and personal protection and safety training have been obtained. It is recommended that each investigator for the domestic/industrial wastewater program complete the Personal Protection and Safety Course meeting the requirements of OSHA 29 CFR 1910.

Method of Training: Supervised independent study, physical examination.

Level of Effort: 16 hours

Phase 2: Basic Investigator Training

Objectives: To gain a basic working knowledge of state and federal regulations and to obtain the knowledge and skills needed to complete a comprehensive water quality inspection.

2A. Regulatory Framework (40 Hours)

Suggested Materials:

- Title 30 Texas Administrative Code (applicable rules)
- Texas Water Code
- Federal Code of Regulations (applicable parts)
- TNRCC Inspection Manual(s)
- EPA Inspection Manuals
- EPA Guidance Manuals

Method of Training: Supervised independent study

2B. Inspection Skills (100 Hours)

Suggested Materials:

- TNRCC Inspection Manual(s)
- EPA Inspection Manuals
- EPA Guidance Manuals
- Texas Water Utilities Association Technical Manuals
- Texas A&M University Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) Training Manuals
- Technical Videos
- TEEX Training Courses (Regional Short Schools)
- Laboratory Inspection Training (TNRCC lab training course or equivalent)
- State and Federal Training Sessions

Method of Training: Supervised independent study and OJT. A minimum of 40 of the 100 hours must be on-site facility inspection activity led by a fully qualified investigator. If a beginning investigator will be responsible for conducting inspections in multiple programs, the inspector must visit at least two of each type of facility that he/she will routinely inspect when fully qualified (CAFO, industrial wastewater, domestic wastewater, sewage sludge use). If a beginning inspector will do wastewater inspections, he/she must inspect at least one wastewater major.

Additional OJT should include selected follow-up inspections and complaint investigations.

Level of Effort: 140 hours

Phase 3: Advanced and Continued Training (Annual Requirement)

Objectives: To gain advanced technical knowledge and skills; to obtain a thorough working knowledge of the state and federal programs, including enforcement and legal issues as well as professional and non-technical training.

3A. Advanced Technical Training (16 Hours)

Suggested Materials:

- EPA workshops with advance topics
- TNRCC in-house training sessions with advanced topics
- Independent study or course work relating to advanced inspection skills, technical skills or program administration (e.g. Texas A&M Short Schools, college credits, Texas Rural Water Association, Texas Water Utilities Association, Water Environment Association of Texas, Texas Water and Wastewater Analyst Association, meetings, etc.)
- Advanced training material - selected reading references
- Preparation and presentation of water quality programs (public and in-house)

3B. Annual Safety Training (8 Hours)

Suggested Materials:

- Approved eight-hour annual safety training program, or
- Attendance at a minimum of eight monthly regional safety meetings

3C. Health Monitoring

- Annual physical examination required for investigators who are subject to exposure to hazardous materials (not required for program administrators or instructors who are not at risk for exposure)

3D. Non-technical Training

- Examples: media training, selected videos, expert witness orientation, writing skills training, employee development seminars, etc.

Method of Training: Supervised independent study, approved formal course work, TNRCC and EPA workshops and training programs, approved safety training program, annual physical exam.

Level of Effort: 24 hours

Phase 4: Refresher Training

Objectives: To provide for the continuing evaluation of individual investigator skills and to make training available on an as-needed basis.

- The need for refresher training will be decided on an individual case-by-case basis by the Regional Section Manager, Regional Manager, or FOD Program Support Section Manager, as appropriate. For example, a manager may determine that an investigator is deficient in his/her knowledge of sampling procedures. The manager would assign training only in that specific area and would document the training to remove the deficiency.

Method of Training: Variable

Level of Effort: Variable

TNRCC WATER QUALITY INVESTIGATOR TRAINING RECORD

NAME: _____

REGION: _____

PHASE 1

BASIC ORIENTATION AND HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING

1A. BASIC ORIENTATION (10 HRS.)

DATE	MATERIAL/ACTIVITY	HOURS

1B. PERSONAL PROTECTION AND SAFETY (6 HRS.)

DATE	MATERIAL/ACTIVITY	HOURS

1C. HEALTH MONITORING

DATE	LOCATION

TNRCC WATER QUALITY INVESTIGATOR TRAINING RECORD

NAME: _____

REGION: _____

PHASE 2

BASIC INVESTIGATOR TRAINING

2A. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK (40 HRS.)

DATE	MATERIAL/ACTIVITY	HOURS

2B. INSPECTION SKILLS (100 HRS. WITH MINIMUM 40 HRS. ON-SITE INSP.)

DATE	MATERIAL/ACTIVITY	HOURS

PHASE 2 (CONTINUED)

2B. INSPECTION SKILLS (100 HRS. WITH MINIMUM 40 HRS. ON-SITE INSP.) (CONTINUED)

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TNRCC WATER QUALITY INVESTIGATOR TRAINING RECORD

NAME: _____

REGION: _____

PHASE 3

ADVANCED AND CONTINUED TRAINING (ANNUAL REQ.)

3A. ADVANCED TECHNICAL TRAINING (16 HRS.)

DATE	MATERIAL/ACTIVITY	HOURS

3B. ANNUAL SAFETY TRAINING (8 HRS.)

DATE	MATERIAL/ACTIVITY	HOURS

TNRCC WATER QUALITY INVESTIGATOR TRAINING RECORD

NAME: _____

REGION: _____

PHASE 3 (CONTINUED)

3C. HEALTH MONITORING

DATE	LOCATION

3D. NON-TECHNICAL TRAINING

DATE	MATERIAL/ACTIVITY	HOURS

TNRCC WATER QUALITY INVESTIGATOR TRAINING RECORD

NAME: _____

REGION: _____

PHASE 4

REFRESHER TRAINING (AS NEEDED)

DATE	MATERIAL/ACTIVITY	HOURS

TEXAS NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

**BASIC WATER QUALITY INVESTIGATOR
CERTIFICATION RECOMMENDATION FORM**

I recommend that _____ be certified as a Water Quality Investigator and be authorized to conduct inspections and investigations relating to water quality management.

I certify that he/she has completed the course of study as prescribed in the Field Operations Division's Water Quality Investigator Training Program and/or has complied with all other requirements, including:

	Date Completed
Basic Orientation (10 hours)	_____
Personal Protection and Safety (6 hours)	_____
Health Monitoring (date of first visit)	_____
Basic Investigator Training (140 hours)	_____

Equivalent Training Claimed* (____ hours)

- * Equivalent training includes any academic training or training that existing employees might have already received from actual water quality site work experience. Note: If equivalent training is claimed, documentation must be available in regional office files to show that the employee's work experience and/or training has resulted in training equivalent to that training required in the TNRCC Water Quality Investigator Training Program.

Attached are copies of the applicable training records.

Regional Section Manager

Date

Regional Manager

Date

FOD Program Support Section Manager

Date

TEXAS NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

**SENIOR WATER QUALITY INVESTIGATOR
CERTIFICATION RECOMMENDATION FORM**

I recommend that _____ be certified as a Senior Water Quality Investigator and be authorized to conduct inspections and investigations relating to water quality management.

I certify that he/she has completed the course of study as prescribed in the Field Operations Division's Water Quality Investigator Training Program, has completed three or more years of continuous experience in the water quality program, and has demonstrated advanced:

- Knowledge of the regulations,
- Inspection skills, and
- Technical knowledge.

Attached are copies of the applicable training records.

Regional Section Manager

Date

Regional Manager

Date

FOD Program Support Section Manager

Date